

REMARKS

Claims 1-33 and 35 are now pending in the present application. In light of the telephone interview with the Examiner on October 24, 2005, and the amendments to the claims as included herein, reconsideration is respectfully requested.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §112:

Claims 4, 17, 21 and 33 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Each of these claims has been amended in accordance with the rejections as set forth by the Examiner, and specifically to address the directional aspect of the indefiniteness.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102:

Claims 1, 3, 6-13, 15, 16, 18, 20, 22-32 and 35 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Chase, U.S. Patent No. 5,636,906. Each and every one of independent claims 1, 18, 26, 28 and 35, as amended, defines at least one support post extending from the inner surface proximate the hub aperture and structurally supporting a wheel cladding with respect to a wheel. Per the telephone interview with the Examiner, and in response to the Examiner's response to arguments in the Office Action of July 25, 2005, Applicant has amended each and every one of independent claims 1, 18, 26, 28 and 35 by deleting the term "substantially" before the corresponding term "proximate." As previously discussed with the Examiner, it is well known in the art that one of the steps conducted in balancing a wheel assembly includes clamping the wheel assembly very near the associated hub aperture thereof by placing a conically-shaped wedge within the hub aperture and applying an axially directed load onto the wheel assembly. Deflection of the associated wheel cladding is reduced or prevented by the presently-inventive design, thereby allowing proper wheel balancing.

Accordingly, independent claims 1, 18, 26, 28 and 35 are in condition for allowance. Claims 2-9, 19-23, 27 and 29-33 are dependent from those independent

claims as noted above, which are in condition for allowance, and are therefore also in condition for allowance.

Independent claim 10 defines a wheel cladding assembly that comprises, among other things, a body member adapted to conform to an outer surface of a wheel, the body member having an exposed outer surface, an inner surface and a plurality of circumferentially-spaced lug apertures, and including at least one alignment tab extending from the inner surface and located radially inward of the lug apertures. As was discussed with the Examiner during the telephone interview, it appears that none of the "tabs" as disclosed in Chase '906 are located radially inward of the lug apertures of the wheel, and further that the cladding as disclosed within Chase '906 does not even include lug apertures therein.

Accordingly, claim 10 is in condition for allowance. Claims 11-17 are dependent from claim 10 which is in condition for allowance, as noted above, and are therefore also in condition for allowance.

Accordingly, claims 1-33 and 35 are now believed to be in condition for allowance, and a Notice of Allowability is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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